



## Roy Cooper North Carolina Attorney General

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### **2,100 NC sex offenders found on MySpace, says AG Cooper**

#### *Cooper also seeking information from Facebook*

**Raleigh:** More than 2,100 registered North Carolina sex offenders were found on MySpace, information that Attorney General Roy Cooper is sharing with law enforcement.

In response to a subpoena from Cooper, MySpace turned over the names, IP and email addresses of 2,116 convicted North Carolina sex offenders found on its social networking web site. Cooper has requested similar information from Facebook, another social network popular with young people.

"It's no secret that child predators are on these web sites," Cooper said. "Turning over information about these predators to law enforcement helps, but MySpace, Facebook and other social networks need to do much more to protect kids online."

In response to discussions with Cooper and other state attorneys general, MySpace became the first social networking web site to develop technology to find and remove sex offenders from its site. Cooper is pushing Facebook and other social networking websites to take similar steps.

Cooper helped win a new state law last year that bans convicted sex offenders from social networking sites where children are members. A violation of the measure, which took effect December 1, 2008, is a felony.

At Cooper's request, the State Bureau of Investigation has shared information about North Carolina sex offenders found on MySpace with all 100 sheriffs in North Carolina. Under state law, convicted sex offenders are required to register with their local sheriff's office. Cooper has asked his SBI Computer Crimes Unit, which leads the NC Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, to work with the sheriffs to use this information to help keep communities safe.

His office has also shared this information with probation officials from the Department of Correction for use in identifying violations by probationers who may be barred from using a computer or contacting minors.

MySpace says that the sex offenders it has identified have been removed from the web site. The information provided by MySpace does not include sex offenders who have not been convicted, are not registered, or may be using aliases on the site. Cooper remains concerned about other sex offenders on the site who may be lying about who they are, and is continuing to ask MySpace to do more to protect children on its site.

For more than three years, Cooper and Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal have led a group of Attorneys General who are pushing to make social networks safer, winning landmark national agreements with MySpace and Facebook in 2008. They are pushing social networks to use technology such as age and identity verification to better protect children.

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